



San Diego City Attorney **MICHAEL J. AGUIRRE**

NEWS RELEASE

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EXCLUSIVE DEAL WITH YWCA ON TRANSFER OF CITY'S FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER VIOLATES CITY'S OWN BIDDING PROCESS

City Attorney's Interim Report calls for Open Process

San Diego, CA—In working exclusively with the YWCA, while excluding many long-standing community partners, to transfer the nation's first and most comprehensive Family Justice Center (FJC) for victims of domestic violence to a nonprofit organization, the Mayor violated the City's own managed competition guidelines, which repeatedly address the need for "neutrality" when determining whether a City service should be managed by an outside contractor.

"In this case, no other contactor had the opportunity to bid for the contract, thus, destroying the integrity of the process," said City Attorney Michael Aguirre.

The finding is included in the *City Attorney's Interim Report No. 30, An Open, Public Process is Needed to Determine the Future of the San Diego Family Justice Center*. The report was released today.

The report further concludes that the FJC founded in 2002 by the City of San Diego through a collaborative partnership with the San Diego City Attorney's Office and the San Diego Police Department cannot be transferred to the YWCA, a non-profit organization, without an open, public and all-inclusive process. To do otherwise, would also be in violation of the San Diego Municipal Code which created the FJC Steering Committee—the governing body charged with overseeing the FJC.

For the past six months, unbeknownst to the City Attorney, the Mayor's Office and former City Attorney Casey Gwinn, who is the new executive director of the YWCA, have been working together with District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis on the FJC transfer plan without consultation of the City Attorney who is a member of the FJC Steering Committee and without consultation of many long-standing partners of the FJC.

The YWCA's two-phase plan calls for the immediate transfer of the leadership and management of the City's Family Justice Center Department to the YWCA, ultimately eliminating the FJC as a City Department altogether.

(MORE)

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Furthermore, the YWCA proposes the implementation of the District Attorney's Regional Family Justice Center Network Plan. The City, however, would still be funding the FJC operation through a combined lease/management contract in the amount of \$900,000 annually.

"There is no clear explanation as to why the City should continue to pay for the lease space," said City Attorney Aguirre. "The YWCA plan dismantles the nationally-recognized model the City built by having under one roof the entire domestic violence units of the San Diego Police Department and the San Diego City Attorney's Office."

According to Assistant City Attorney Margaret Jacobo, community partners of the FJC and interested members of the public are invited to attend the FJC Planning Committee meeting of June 4 to discuss the future of the FJC. The meeting will be held at noon at the FJC, 707 Broadway, 7th floor conference room, downtown San Diego. Please RSVP to Ms. Jacobo's assistant, Mart Overly at 619-533-4547 or moverly@sanidiego.gov.

To view the *City Attorney's Interim Report No. 30, An Open, Public Process is Needed to Determine the Future of the San Diego Family Justice Center and exhibits 1-61*, visit www.sandiegocityattorney.org, click "City Attorney Interim Investigative Reports.

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